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RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY 0183
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RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0891
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0151
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 0310
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SUBJECT: SPAIN SUPPORTS CONTINUED PRESSURE ON BURMA

REF: STATE 137644

1. (U) Poloff delivered reftel demarche and background materials separately on October 2, to Fernando Fernandez-Arias, Spanish Deputy Director General for Human Rights, and Jose Luis Garcia Galan, Deputy Director General for Southeast Asia, and thanked them for the several statements already issued by Spain and the EU on the matter. Fernandez-Arias replied that he was in the process of sending instructions to Geneva for a Spanish intervention at the UNHRC that would be fairly severe on Burma. Additionally, he was waiting for greater details on a possible trip to Rangoon by Spain's Special Ambassador for Human Rights Silvia Escobar, accompanying an EU delegation. He agreed that continued pressure is necessary.

2. (U) Garcia-Galan agreed with Poloff and said that the U.S. has been crystal clear in its position on Burma during these recent developments. He appreciated U.S. recognition of Spain's statements of condemnation, and he added that Spain would remain committed to the EU position which would be elaborated fully at the October 15 GAERC. He also told poloff that Ambassador Escobar had sought a Burmese entry visa and been denied in Geneva.

3. (U) Fernandez-Arias called Poloff October 3 to follow up that Escobar had not gained a visa and the mission would be delayed. He expected that the issue would be discussed in Brussels at the upcoming EU COPS and GAERC meetings, where decisions would be made on whether to send an EU delegation.

4. (U) The Spanish foreign ministry issued a communique on September 26 warning against any violent repression of the peaceful demonstrations. The declaration also expressed solidarity with the Burmese people and full support for all international efforts for a peaceful solution. On October 2, Jose Blanco, Party Secretary of the ruling Spanish Socialist Workers Party also issued a public condemnation calling for an end to repression and steps toward democratization of Burma. At a joint press conference with Russian President Putin September 28, President Zapatero expressed his support for the arrival of democracy in Burma.

